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SECURITY INFORMATION
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REPORT

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DATE OF
INFORMATION 1951

SUBJECT Political

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DATE DIST. 25 Feb 1952

WHERE
PUBLISHED Cairo; Tunis

NO. OF PAGES 2

DATE
PUBLISHED 28 Aug, 7 Dec 1951

LANGUAGE Arabic

SUPPLEMENT TO
REPORT NO.

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SOURCE Periodical and newspaper as indicated.

ALBANIAN MUFTI'S PRAISE FOR COMMUNISM DRAWS ATTACK

At-Tali'a, organ of the Tunisian Communist Party, on 7 December 1951, fea-
tured on its front page a statement allegedly made by the Mufti of Albania ex-
tolling the freedom "enjoyed" by Albanian Moslems and praising life under the
"people's regime."

According to at-Tali'a, the statement was written in Arabic in the Mufti's
handwriting and was given to Muhammad Sahabu and abd-Allah al-Majiri, Algerian
and Tunisian delegates who attended the tenth annual celebration of the Albanian
Worker's Party, to take back to their respective countries.

The statement was addressed to "brethren" in Algeria and Tunisia, calling
on them to "preach to and advise the Moslem faithful, guided by the Islamic prin-
ciples of love and truth which are associated with your people's party, for the
liberation of your people from the yoke of French imperial colonialism."

"Before our people's regime assumed authority," the Mufti's statement said,
"foreign propaganda used to claim that popular systems of government do not de-
stroy religion alone, but also family life. Our educated religious men, the
strong in faith, and the friends of the people, treated this as a propaganda lie."

The statement continued, "Here in Albania, we enjoy the people's regime.
As a religious society, together with brothers of other religions, we live peace-
fully with each other. Never in the past was our condition as bright as it is
at present, when compared with the former regime which persecuted our people and
religion."

Apparently the statement by the Albanian Mufti was made much earlier than
the date of issue of the above-mentioned newspaper, since Rabitat al-Shabab
(Youth League), a Wafdist weekly published in Cairo, carried a one-page editor-
ial in its 28 August 1951 issue attacking the Albanian Mufti's statement. Text
of the editorial, which was entitled "The Red Ulama," follows:

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Communism repudiates all religions and declares a relentless war against them. This is a reality of which the entire world is aware. Moslem religious leaders in the various Islamic countries are agreed that Communism and Islam are incompatible because Communism repudiates divinity and ascribes everything to matter.

Yet, there is an extremely small segment of Moslem Ulama, or rather those who like to refer to themselves as such, who disregard the unanimity of Moslem religious leaders and propagandize on behalf of this destructive faith in an attempt to deceive the Islamic world about what is actually going on within the countries that have adopted this hateful system. They declare that everything is as it should be in the Soviet Union; that Islam is properly respected there; that Moslems behind the Iron Curtain enjoy complete liberty in performing their religious rites; that they are the happiest among all peoples, etc.

It is not strange that such opinions and statements, which contradict the obvious truth, are made only by Ulama in countries dominated by the Soviet Union or in those which fall under its influence. Those Red Ulama naturally receive their information from Moscow.

In this class of Ulama is the Albanian delegation, headed by Imam Muharram, the Grand Mufti of Albania, which was invited by the Soviet government to visit Moscow and other Soviet cities. No sooner had this delegation accepted the invitation than its objective became obvious. Immediately after the visit, this delegation issued a statement in which it claimed that the holding of Islamic rites in the Soviet Union is guaranteed and that Islam there is highly respected. As evidence of this, they cited the existence of a grand mosque in Moscow and tombs of Moslem leaders in Tashkent which they had seen, as well as a very old copy of the Koran in one of its libraries, dating back 700 years.

These were their only proofs that freedom for Islam is guaranteed in the Soviet Union, when in reality the Soviet Moslems do not enjoy any religious freedom and live under horrible persecution.

Disregarding the dispersal of the Moslems in the Caucasus and other Soviet regions and the threatening and jailing of Moslem leaders, let us look at what the Soviet Union has done to Islamic education according to whose teachings alone the Moslem can live: Soviet laws have prohibited religious education wholly and completely, and the Communist authorities have closed schools which were teaching the principles of Islam and have struck down everyone connected with these matters. Instead, they encouraged atheistic and Communist propaganda to engender in the youth disbelief and godlessness.

Perhaps the ban on religious education in the Soviet Union, which the Albanian Grand Mufti witnessed there, is the reason for his failure to mention religious education in his statement. He and the gang that visited the Soviet Union with him were unable to find one single Moslem preacher either in Moscow or in any other Soviet city, nor were they able to find one single Moslem magazine in all that huge country.

If the Moslems in the Soviet Union were actually enjoying religious freedom, the government would permit anyone wishing to determine this fact to visit this country. In fact it would welcome such visitors instead of limiting its invitations to those agents whom it uses as loudspeakers for its Communist missionary work and for deceiving the outside world on the tragedy which has befallen all religions, and Islam especially, in the Soviet Union and its satellites.

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